

THE COURIER

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General Oliver Otis Howard Speaks at Bethel

Civil War General Oliver Otis Howard spoke at Bethel in the afternoon of 15 July 1862 at the Bethel House and later at a pro-Union rally in Pattee's Hall on Spring Street. During that day, elections for officers of three Bethel militia companies under the direction of Major Frye of Lewiston were held. General Howard addressed these companies from the piazza of the Bethel House, which stood on a very visible location overlooking the Bethel Common. During the evening, at a gathering in Pattee's Hall [razed in 1979], the General was greeted with "a storm of applause." Injured early in June 1862 at the Battle of Fair Oaks, his right arm had to be amputated. He spent the next eighty days recovering and touring his native Maine in support of the Union war effort. In the account of the event recorded in the *Oxford Democrat*, published in Paris [Maine], 25 July 1862, it was noted that it was obvious he was suffering considerable pain from his wound, but he managed to keep the audience "spellbound as he portrayed the condition of the army and wants of our country." This report continued, "He was constantly interrupted with applause from the audience and succeeded in inspiring in all a greater love of country."

Howard was followed by Major Frye of Lewiston, who made an eloquent speech during which two large American flags were brought into the room. It was reported that the effect of this action was "electric." According to the account in the *Democrat*, it seemed "as though everyone was ready to fight for it [the flag] and under it and the Major made a most happy impression upon all." At the close of his remarks, a committee of seven was selected to assist the local Sanitary Commission chaired by David F. Brown (1812-1883) in supplying the troops.

It was also announced that subscriptions would be raised to give \$50 to everyone who enlisted under the present call of the President, in addition to that furnished by the State.

The column continued: "Gen. Howard spoke in the highest

terms of the discipline of the Bethel soldiers on the Potomac, and of the faithfulness of Captain [Clark] Edwards in the discharge of his duty. Cheers were then given for the speaker, for the Union, for the President, for General McClellan when the meeting adjourned." "It was," concluded *The Democrat* columnist, perhaps with some measure of hyperbole, "the most enthusiastic meeting ever in Bethel."

Oliver Otis Howard was a Maine man, born in Leeds in 1830. A graduate of Bowdoin College (1850) and the U.S. Military Academy (1854), he served in the Seminole War

before becoming a mathematics instructor at West Point. He resigned this position in 1861 to become a colonel in the Maine Volunteer Regiment, where he participated in many battles of the war, including Antietam, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg. During the Peninsular Campaign of 1862 at Fair Oaks, he was wounded and lost an arm. He later served in Tennessee and with Sherman in his March to the Sea and the Carolina Campaign.

In 1865, Howard was selected by President Andrew Johnson as Commissioner of what became known as the Freedman's Bureau to provide for black southerners freed during the war. Also instrumental in establishing schools and colleges for former slaves, he was active in the founding of Howard University in 1867, which was named in his honor and where he served as president from 1869-1873. He later was involved in peace negotiations with the Apache Indians and two years later led military campaigns against several tribes of Pacific Northwest Indians. Following this engagement, he served briefly

as superintendent of West Point and held commands in several parts of the nation, retiring with the rank of Major General. He lived the rest of his life in Burlington, VT, where he was a popular lecturer and author before his death and burial there in 1909. For more information about Howard, see his *Autobiography* (1907), John A. Carpenter, *Sword and Olive Branch: Oliver Otis Howard* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1999), and William S. McFeely, *Yankee Stepfather: General O. O. Howard and the Freedman* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968).



Oliver Otis Howard (1830-1909), ca. 1865

Photo courtesy of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission

Barn Redux

Bethel's Most Modern Barn in 1950

By Donald G. Bennett

Introduction

The idea for this story came from two sources: the 2005 exhibit of "Barn Again! Celebrating an American Icon" by the Smithsonian Institution and my recollections of the episodes from the fire in 1944 to the opening of the new Thurston barns in 1948 onwards. I was a Thurston farm neighbor; and, of course, one is always expected to keep an eye on what your neighbor was doing.

My own barn experience started with my grandfather Crosby's barn in Arlington; its purpose was horses, hay and the trimming, washing and packing of vegetables for trucking to the Boston market. Then we moved to Bethel. My father's dairy operation, Riverside Farms, purchased milk from fifteen local farmers. Picking up milk from each of these farms on a daily basis gave me many mental snapshots of Bethel's barns. These accumulated snapshots made the Thurston's new dairy barn really stand out in my mind as very new, very different and very up to date. Finally, Kathy and I inherited my grandparents' Crosby summer home in Sunday River, which had a connected barn and small tie-up. The Red House barn was a generic family barn since the original owners operated a tannery as their main business. But this barn showed remodeling efforts. One half was post and beam construction and the new half was a mixture of framing with post and beam. Spending summer vacations there gave me connections with another neighborhood group: the Nowlins and Beans. (Jane Bean Young was the leader of this "gang.") We used to play "Follow the Leader" in my grandparents' barn then head for the Bean's barn to try out their haylofts and beams.

I wish to gratefully acknowledge and thank Mike and Connie Thurston and Eric Wight for their very helpfully provided information and for correcting errors and filling voids in my memory of those years from before 1944 until the late 1980s. In true New England fashion, Eric made a "dooryard" call one Sunday morning in June 2005 to tell me of his memories as a teenager working on his grandfather's farm. He also told how his father, Daniel Wight, Paul's son-in-law, and Paul made trips to see how things were done in other regions of the northeast and even in Wisconsin. They were looking for new dairy farming ideas, innovations, new building designs and how recent improvements in farming machinery actually worked. Finally, luckily, I got in a few words with David "Fuzzy" Thurston one day in July 2005 at the new golf shop at Sunday River. He reaffirmed for me the role of the farm as a place for kids to play.

For more information about the Thurston family genealogy one should consult the publication, "Thurstons of Errol, NH," revised 4 August 1995 by Robert D. Stoddard. This document is available in the Research Library of the Bethel Historical Society.

My great-grandfather, Arthur E. Bennett, came to Bethel

in May 1914 to buy the farm adjoining that of J. A. Thurston. His son, Edward E. Bennett, moved his family to this farm from Errol during the summer of 1914. A. E. Bennett married Celia Marie Thurston in Wilsons Mills 15 October 1877. In the 1880s, they left their Errol farm in the winter months to run a logging camp. Celia Thurston Bennett died in 1904; A. E. Bennett died in 1933.

A Unique Barn

Only months after national V-J Day celebrations had ended, passers-by on Routes 2 and 26 through Mayville had a new item to spark their curiosity and interest. A terracotta tile structure was slowly taking shape next to Paul Thurston's home where the highway crested before dipping into its winding route along the river toward Newry. Local drivers knew that a year before the Thurstons had lost barn, cattle, hay, and carriage house in a tragic fire. But what was happening now?

The answer was that the town's newest, most modern, as fireproof-as-buildings-could-be, dairy barn was rising from the ashes of the previous year's disaster. Onlookers, like me, and other members of the Thurston family saw special building features appear that would make the Thurston barn a unique one for Bethel. Then as the summer of 1946 wore on, onlookers knew that another building was under way as well. The second building, a fireproof hay barn was going up a short distance north of the cattle barn. This barn's signature appearance was its corrugated, concrete and asbestos composition panels.

The most important lesson in barn building that has been passed on from generation to generation is: Decide precisely what your barn will be used for and then build a barn to fit its future use. (In real life, more often than not, only the barn's first owner gets the right barn for the job.) At this juncture in his farming career, Paul Thurston had a chance to do just that.

There are at least three perspectives on barns afloat in society: There is the perspective of the intellectual, artist, writer, social historian who sees barns in almost romantic mental constructions depicting beauty, frugality, struggle, "fortress" against the elements and the vicissitudes of the farmer. There is the nostalgic perspective which comes from childhood memories formed while playing in barns and hay mows, youthful years of farm living, happy days. And finally, there is the perspective of the farmer who has to use the barn(s) for his farm production, unromantic, endless hours of labor, daily anxiety and isolation.

In the 19th century three types of buildings stood out as characteristic sights of Bethel's economic landscape: mills, barns and covered bridges. The year 2005 has become the year of the barn. To celebrate the barn's place in growing America, the Smithsonian Institution has put an exhibit on the road called "Barn Again! Celebrating an American Icon." As you might have guessed from the story's title, this article is about barns, specifically a dairy barn in Bethel.

(Continued on the next page)

As the center of Bethel's widespread farming community, Mayville claimed the town's best-known barn of that era, the old fairgrounds barn near (in 2005) Bethel Regional Airport. Large barns were the *sine qua non* of small town economies dependent on surrounding farms for feeding the inhabitants – barns are also New England icons. Some barns were seen as picturesque, but usually they were seen as an essential utility. (Barns, also sometimes called granaries, had also become the symbol for a new 19th Century social organization, *The Grange*, a fraternal order devoted to improving farm life.) By the 1950s Maine's remaining covered bridges were deemed to be of such historic value that they warranted state protection. The barn, however, although it too, like the covered bridge, had been slowly disappearing, was not so fortunate. Fire had always been the barn's worst enemy. Hundreds of Maine barns have been lost to fire but loss of a barn was a far more personal tragedy than simply losing a building.

Barns had a life of their own. Life came from use whether it was a family barn housing a horse, some cows and oxen and hay or a huge horse barn owned by a logging company; its life drew energy, nature and activity from its inhabitants – cows, horses, oxen, sheep, goats, barn swallows, bats, cats and mice. One evening at dusk, I have counted twenty-four barn swallows swooping in through the open main barn door while twenty-four bats darted out into the gathering darkness. However, without usefulness or life inside, an abandoned barn slowly deteriorates; it weathers away, its beams sag and eventually break; the clapboards and shingles that had shielded it from the ravages of rain, sleet and snow eventually grow increasingly porous, letting in more and more water that spreads rot into key joints and timbers.

(Continued on page 4)

BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE

The Bethel Historical Society is committed to building on its reputation as a premier regional history center that will continue to enrich the educational and cultural life of its community for generations to come. Members and friends have generously contributed to the operations of the Society and to the acquisition of the Robinson House. In order to ensure the long-term maintenance and further development of the Center's facilities, programs, and collections, the Society is seeking new forms of support. You, readers of *The Courier*, are asked to consider making a charitable gift to the Society through a bequest in your will, the establishment of a trust, or a number of other financial arrangements and options that are available. These charitable gifts can be structured to support the Society's mission while at the same time assuring the security of your family. For more information, please contact the Society by calling (207) 824-2908 or (800) 824-2910 or by writing to P.O. Box 12, Bethel, ME 04217-0012 or by emailing: info@bethelhistorical.org

President's Column

From 19 August through 22 October, the Society will host the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition, "Barn Again! Celebrating an American Icon." We are very pleased that the Maine Humanities Council selected us as one of three sites in Maine for this outstanding presentation, which contains very informative panels on several aspects of barns throughout America. This significant exhibit has been enhanced by several panels developed by the Maine Humanities Council on Maine barns and accompanied by our own display on Bethel area barns and a sampling of farm tools often seen in barns.

As this will be my last column as your president, I wish to thank everyone who helped us make the last three years one of accomplishment, including the attainment of the largest membership total in Society history, the addition of a \$117,500 endowment for the Dr. Mason House, and of course being a site for the first Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition to come to Maine. In addition, our volunteer participation is at all-time high and last year our Annual Fund reached a record level of giving both in amount contributed and number of donors.

To our new president, Al Cressy, I wish the greatest success as the Society moves forward to complete its capital campaign and build an even stronger organization to serve the needs of the 21st century.

Arlan R. Jodrey

Capital Campaign Update

Over \$692,000 has been raised to date from cash, stock, gifts, pledges, grants, and challenges from over 400 donors. Another comprehensive listing of those making gifts will be included in a future issue. To learn more about this important Society project or to make a capital gift in any amount, see our web-site address on page 12 or call (800) 824-2910 or write us at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, ME 04217-0012.

ANNUAL FUND

Help keep the Society strong by making a gift to its Annual Fund Campaign. Tax deductible contributions assist in supporting its exhibits, special events, publications, and other programming. Gifts in any amount may be made throughout the year to the Society at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, ME 04217-0012.

In Memoriam

Died 13 May 2005, David Grover Glascock, Maitland, FL,
Life Member
Died 11 August 2005, Hope Tibbetts, Bethel, Life Member
Died 30 August 2005, William G. Hastings, Sr., Shelburne,
NH, Senior Member

Barn Redux

Right: House and barn face the Bethel to Newry Corner road (now US Route 2). Far right: Same buildings viewed from across the Androscoggin River. The Thurston family moved here from Newry Corner in the 1890's. The buildings were most likely built by Spencer Bartlett in the 1830's. Barn, ell and house were destroyed in a 1900 fire.



Right: House and ell that replaced the same buildings lost in the 1900 fire. Far right: A view of the carriage house and barn built after the 1900 fire with part of the house veranda showing. Carriage passenger is Murray Thurston, circa 1922. The barn and carriage house behind him were lost in the 1944 fire.



Right: Bethel's only tile dairy barn seen in its second life as an apartment-style motel after the highway was relocated in 1974. Far right: This July 2005 photo shows the ruins of a 1950s era cattle underpass on discontinued Route 2.



Right: The River View Resort in July 2005: Within the shell of 32 condos lies the 1968 Barn Motel - the most modern barn in Bethel in 1950. Far right: Built by J. A. Thurston after his home burned in 1900, in 2005 this house was 104 years old.



In the 20th century, barns quickly lost one of their main functions as tractors replaced horses and oxen. An “industrial strength” barn designed only for hay and horses lost its place in life when the horse lost its job. The 1830s, the period when the third generation of Sudbury Canada (later Bethel) settlers were building large barns (the first classic New England barn era) was also the date when the main house and barn on the Thurston property were built. Local farming methods underwent constant change as new inventions in farm machinery swiftly moved into farming communities increasing each farmer’s productivity. Barns changed too as the years went on but remodeling a barn posed a more difficult problem to the owner because few could afford the expense of tearing down a large barn, then turn around the next week to build a new more modern one. Farmers “upgraded” their equipment as rapidly as they could afford to do so. Newspapers, farm journals and local farm equipment dealers made sure that the newest items were advertised and made available. Barns, however, were a different matter. So when, the commuters, logging truck drivers and vacationers passing through Mayville saw a new barn hoisting up its walls on the Thurston farm, it was a novel, if not unique, sight.

The barn building activity Mayville’s passers-by watched in the late 1940s was the second time, since the Thurston family had first owned the farm in the 1890s, that fire had ruined their barn. As I understand it, this is how the story goes.

Jacob Almond (J. A.) Thurston was born in Eaton, New Hampshire (a town south of Conway) 15 November 1843. Not long after he was born, his family moved to Errol, New Hampshire, where he grew up, married and began a career of logging and milling that gained public approval for himself and for his business. During his years in Errol he was justice of the peace, selectman and town clerk. Then the J. A. Thurston family moved to Newry, Maine. At Newry Corner (near Stony Brook), he built and operated a dowel and spool mill as well as a general store. His business operations covered a wide area; in 1888 he was involved in buying heavy machinery for a new mill from the Erie (Pennsylvania) Ironworks. When the engine and boiler arrived they were moved to the mill in Riley Plantation from Bethel by a team of ten horses. Bethel’s 1887 Town Report detailed all of the transactions of the town farm, which included entries of buying and selling by J. A. Thurston. (Some of the items sold to the farm by Thurston included: a scythe for \$1, a package of Horsford’s Bread Preparation for \$.20 and two pounds of tea for \$1.) The Newry Corner mill was known as the J. A. Thurston mill and store. His son, Paul Cleveland, who would succeed him as owner and president of the J. A. Thurston Company, was born there on 2 December 1887.

In 1893, J. A. Thurston purchased the farm in Mayville that became known later as the Thurstonia Dairy Farm. The *Oxford Democrat* reported that on 21 May 1900, a very severe thunderstorm stayed in the Bethel area for nearly four hours. The account in the *Democrat* appeared as follows: “The buildings of Mr. J. A. Thurston were struck by lightning and

burned. The barn received the fatal stroke, which consumed the whole contents of the stable, excepting a pair of oxen, which stood near the door. The flames soon spread to the ell and the main part of the house, which were consumed. Furniture in the main part of the house was saved. The loss is a heavy one amounting to \$6,000 above insurance. There were six horses, six head of horned cattle, 30 tons of hay, \$500 worth of dowels, carriages, sleighs, and farm wagons, mowing machinery, horse rake, hay tedder, corn planter, seed sower and plows. Mr. Thurston was one of our progressive farmers and everything was in first class condition.” J. A. Thurston soon rebuilt the barn, ell and house. The barn from what can be determined from photographs was quite similar to the original barn, which had been built sometime in the 1830s. The looks of the new main house hinted that J.A.’s plan for his new home called for slightly grander style (a touch of the “Gilded Age” maybe?) compared to the house he had so recently lost.

From 1900 onwards, the J. A. Thurston farm prospered until Jacob died in 1917. Upon his death, his son Paul kept his residence at the farm and assumed the presidency of the family business. Being thirty-one years old, Paul was young, energetic, well-educated and experienced in management skills that would open doors for him locally as well as in county and state politics. (Sometime after Paul became head of the Thurston clan, his taste for enlarging his dairy farm must have taken root.) His family and descendants saw dairy farming as Paul’s hobby. What we do know is that by the time of the 1944 fire, use of the barn had shifted from the general purposes of housing livestock and storing equipment to mainly housing cattle and storing hay. That is the way it was on my last visit before the fire. Most of the big equipment was stored in a wagon shed across the road from the barn near the office building.

In 1917, the homestead buildings consisted of the main house, ell and barn with another building across the road from the main house that was used as a Bethel office for the J. A. Thurston Company as well as a store. (The company mill moved from Newry Corner to the Rumford/Mexico area.) Later this office/store building was remodeled to include family apartments (the building is a black square on Bethel’s 1914 map. My aunt, Ruth Bennett Lord, and her husband, Robert M. (Bob) Lord lived there for a few years after they were married in the early 1930s. Connie Thurston told me that she and Mike lived in one of the two apartments right after they were married.) By 1944, the farmstead included, besides the main house and barn, the office-store-apartment building, a three story hen house, and a large open front carriage shed with four or five bays for storing haying and field equipment as well as the farm tractor (an International Farmall) and as Eric Wight recalled – the 1940s red Dodge farm truck. Although the upland fields seen in the 1890s photograph of the farm had been partially taken over by new trees and brush, the land west of the main road was pastureland used at night for the milking herd and throughout the summer months for young stock.

What was to be my last visit to the barn built in the early

1900s must have been in 1943. It was a chilly fall day and, as usual, my cousins and I were looking for something to do or someone to play with. The Thurston barn was always one place to look. The neighborhood gang of the forties was made up of Bennett kids and Thurston farm kids. The Thurston farm kids (apartment family kids) were as likely to be found in the barn as anyplace. I remember at the time that the two guys we found in the barn were at work cleaning up. They were "Sigi" Olson (who was later killed in Korea) and Neal Merrill. As it turned out that was the last time that I saw that barn.

Late one night in October 1944, disaster struck the Thurston farm again. The October 26, 1944 issue of *The Bethel Oxford County Citizen* headline news item of the week stated: **"Paul Thurston Loses Barn and Guernsey Herd in Night Fire."** The article went on to report that the residence of Thurston was saved but the barn and connecting carriage house were lost at an estimated value of \$30,000. Besides the loss of the barn, 32 registered purebred Guernseys and 60 tons of hay were also lost. The fire department arrived at about 10 PM, but the barn was already fully ablaze. Nearby water sources were soon exhausted. By midnight the fire department moved its pumpers to the Androscoggin River for more water. A Rumford fire engine arrived and setup at Twitchell Brook near E.E. Bennett's farm, nearly a half-mile away; it stayed until daylight. The J. A. Thurston Company office across the road and two apartments were not threatened.

My father had made a brief visit to his parents' farm at the time and was on the scene to help as much as he could with the fire fighting and evacuation. What I remember most about his telling of the tragedy was the awful screams of the cattle as they slowly burned and suffocated. It was a horror no farmer ever wants to imagine. Connie Philbrick Thurston (who became Mrs. Murray Thurston three years after the fire) told me that she and Doris Lord had learned of the fire after returning to Bethel village that evening and had come to the farm where they watched the fire fighting from the office and apartment building across the road.

In 1936, only a few hundred yards from this tragedy, my grandparents, Ed and Minnie Bennett, lost home and barn to fire but thankfully almost all of the livestock had been saved, the cows, outdoors at the time, were kept herded back and away from the fire. Historically, the Thurston farm and my grandfather's farm had a common beginning: their real estate had belonged to Mayville's original settler, Eli Twitchell, brother of Eleazer Twitchell and son of Joseph Twitchell, President of the Proprietors of Sudbury Canada. The Thurston farm had for many years been the home of Eli Twitchell's son-in-law, Barbour Bartlett, and daughter, Julia, then later his grandson, Spencer Bartlett. Another son of Barbour Bartlett, Curatio, had built the farmstead lost in the Bennett's 1936 fire. The two homes, built in the 1830s, were virtually identical in design. Barbour Bartlett had been a very active, well-respected town leader; he served in virtually

every town office and was a founding trustee (corporator) of Bethel (later Gould) Academy. Therefore, after the disastrous fire, Paul Thurston's decision to rebuild his dairy herd and barn contributed to early farming history of this land. If he had not been comfortable living on an active farm, taking pride in his herd and wanting to rebuild, this story would not have been written. Times had changed and often lost buildings meant turning to a different livelihood for the unfortunate owners.

The rebuilding project had four parts: (1) the tile dairy barn, (2) a separate, also virtually fireproof hay barn, (3) a tile garage to replace the lost carriage house that had livestock pens in the basement level and (4) a pair of new wooden silos. (As a sample of how the tile structures once looked, the still visible north gable of the main house ell is made of the same tile. There was a lot of masonry work to be done; Bethel's best-known mason of that time, Frank Gibson, was the mason-in-charge and general contractor. How he would build the new farm buildings was according to a plan that came principally from the owner. Paul Thurston had picked and chosen from some of the best barn designs that he could find in New England. During the time of the fire and the recovery period, Paul's son, Murray, was serving in the Army; his assignments covered a very wide span of the globe: Africa, Sicily, Italy, the Philippines and Japan. Even after the new barns were finished, Eric Wight, Paul's grandson, recalls that Paul and his father (Daniel Wight) took a trip to Beloit, Wisconsin to visit, tour farms and learn from what other farmers were doing in the heart of America's dairy country.

(To be continued in the next issue)



The 2005 Faye Taylor Memorial Art Show featured Maine barns as the theme for the annual contest. More than 160 entries were received from the elementary students of the local school district, which covers five towns. There were nine winners in three age categories and two more citations for outstanding achievement. Two proud grandparents, Bob and Nancy Chadbourne, admire the work of their grandson Justin Stearns, who won first prize for his category. Photo courtesy of Danna B. Nickerson



Martha Fifield Wilkins stands in front of the Chapman-Bennett House in North Newry in 1931

Western Maine Saints: A Newry Family Who Joined the Latter-Day Saints in Seeking a Home in the West

By Mary E. Valentine

Patty Bartlett Sessions was the first in her family to be baptized as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. She was born in Bethel 4 February 1796, the first child of Anna Hall Bartlett, second wife of Enoch Bartlett, who had come from Newton, Massachusetts to Sudbury Canada sometime after the War for American Independence. He settled on a farm in the Middle Intervale section of Bethel. A number of Newton residents had an interest in this area; W. B. Lapham in his *History of Bethel*, records that the rights of nine proprietors had been bought in 1774 by Aaron Richardson and Jonathan Clark of Newton. Nathaniel Segar, a resident of Newton and brother of Enoch Bartlett's first wife, Eliza Segar, had come to Sudbury Canada in 1774, remained through the summer, then returned to Newton. The American Revolution began in the spring of 1775, and Segar served first in the defense of Boston, then re-enlisted for a mission to Ticonderoga and Canada. By the spring of 1779, the battlefront had moved to the southern states, and Nathaniel Segar again traveled to Sudbury Canada, this time accompanied by Jonathan Bartlett, a half-brother of Enoch. They took kettles for boiling down maple sap to make sugar, and after the sap stopped running, spent their time clearing land and building shelters for the winter. Segar's land was on the north side of the river in what is now Hanover, and Jonathan Bartlett later settled on the south side of the river, below Bean's Corner. Four other brothers of Enoch also settled in Sudbury Canada. Perrigrine Sessions, writing about his grandfather, recalls being told that Enoch, with one or two of his half brothers brought their wives and possessions on hand sleds from Fryeburg fifty miles to Sudbury Canada, the youngest child not yet born. Enoch's first wife died about 1789. In 1790, Enoch was listed as a resident of Sudbury Canada, and in 1794 he married Anna Hall of Standish, and brought her to his home there. On 7 April 1800 (according to his grandson Perrigrine), Enoch moved from Bethel (became a town in 1796) to Sunday River Plantation (Bostwick), and

he is listed there in the 1800 census. His oldest daughter, Anna, born 4 November 1766 in Newton, married in 1790 Asa Foster, who was born around 1765 in what later became Sunday River Plantation. Asa was a son of Abner Foster, one of the early pioneers in the Sunday River Valley. Asa Foster owned land bordering Sunday River to the east, and in a deed dated 1812, he sold twenty nine acres bordering Sunday River to Enoch Bartlett, reserving twenty four acres to the north for himself and his wife Anna. It is possible that Asa Foster had built the older part of the Bartlett house either before or after his marriage in 1790, and Enoch Bartlett added the newer portion of the house to accommodate his growing family. After moving to Sunday River Plantation (became part of the town of Newry in 1805) Enoch and Anna Hall Bartlett had six more children, in addition to Patty, Elisha, and Naomah who had been born in Bethel: Jonathan in 1800, Polly in 1802, Aphia in 1804, Lydia in 1806, Loranah in 1808 (d. 1811), and Enoch, Patty's youngest brother, in 1811.

In 1812, at age 17, Patty Bartlett married David Sessions, whose family had come from Vermont and settled in Riley Plantation. They lived for a few years in a log cabin on the Sessions farm. David's mother, Rachel Stevens Session, was obese and suffered from rheumatism. She was a midwife, and Patty began learning this profession by helping her mother-in-law. In December 1815 (after the birth of their first child, Perrigrine, 15 June 1814) David and Patty bought a farm about nine miles to the northeast in an unorganized territory called Andover Gore (1820 census) or Andover West Surplus (1830 census). Their new farm bordered Bear River and was more fertile than David's parents' land in Riley Plantation.

After the move to Bear River, Patty, in reading her Bible, began to feel that baptism was necessary. Most of her neighbors were Methodists, so she chose that church and was baptized 1 October 1816, becoming a member of the Methodist Church. In 1820, her husband David also became a Methodist. The first Methodist house of worship in the Bethel circuit was built in 1814 on the north bank of the Androscoggin River near Dustin's Ferry, which connected Newry with East Bethel. This church was twice struck by lightning; in July 1819, lightning killed Rebecca York McGill of East Bethel during a service in the church.

Additional children were born to David and Patty as the years went by; in 1816, a son Sylvanus was born, and in 1818, a daughter Sylvia. After the birth of Anna in 1820, a larger home was needed, and David built a fine new house into which the family moved in November of that year. In the spring of 1821, David's parents moved in with them. By this time, Rachel Sessions was so crippled with rheumatism that she was unable to do anything for herself, so Patty now had her mother-in-law to care for as well as her husband and children. At this time, David's father was receiving a pension for his former military service of \$96 per year. This cash income must have been welcome in an era when most transactions were by barter. In May 1823, another son, David, was born. During September of that year, Anna, aged three and one half, died of cholera. Two days later, Rachel, Patty's mother-in-law became ill from the same ailment and died on 1 October. A year later, in the fall of 1824, Rachel's husband went to visit a neighbor and died suddenly, probably from a stroke. In the next ten years, three more of the Sessions children died as epidemics of typhus and whooping

cough struck the area. It is not known where David's parents and the four children are buried. As an unorganized territory, Andover West Surplus had no town burial ground, so it seems likely a family burial plot was set aside on the farm. In later years, after Andover West Surplus became part of Newry in March 1837, at a Newry town meeting in March 1854, the three town selectmen were authorized to choose land for a burying ground in the former Andover West Surplus. One of the selectmen at that time was Moses Kilgore, a brother of Perrigrine Sessions' wife Julia Ann, and another selectman had recently married as his second wife a sister of Julia Ann. It seems likely that these selectmen would have chosen the burial ground where there were already graves. The present cemetery in North Newry, called Head O'Tide Cemetery, is probably on land that was part of the Sessions' 400 acre farm in the 1820s and 1830s. In the 1960s when the gravestone inscriptions were recorded by a Bethel Historical Society volunteer, there were no grave markers bearing the Sessions name, but the recorder noted there were some unmarked graves.

How did an area containing part of the Appalachian Trail, but seventy miles from the ocean, happen to have a school and cemetery named "Head O'Tide?" N. S. Baker, Newry Superintendent of Schools in the 1890s wrote the following about Newry history in a letter to *The Bethel News* of 5 August 1896: "Squire Paine began at the Tides." Daniel Paine's house was a short distance north of the Sessions home. Possibly one of the Paine family, looking at the water from the spring snow melt pouring down Wight's Brook into Bear River, might have been reminded of a tidal bore. Wherever the name came from, it seems to have been in use as early as 1839; in his missionary diary of 1 October 1839, Perrigrine Sessions wrote "....thence to the head of the tide and I preached to Paine's school house...."

In August 1833, LDS missionaries Horace Cowan and Hazen Aldrich came south from Letter B through Grafton Notch and stopped at the Sessions home to preach the Mormon doctrine. According to Perrigrine Sessions, his mother believed as soon as she heard the preaching of Cowan and Aldrich, but David thought it was best to consider the matter for a time, so she waited until July 1834 to be baptized. In September of that year, at age twenty, Perrigrine Sessions married Julia Ann Kilgore, the youngest daughter of John and Anna York Kilgore. On 15 August 1835, Brigham Young and Lyman Johnson visited Newry. They held a conference at the home of David and Patty Sessions, and Brigham Young crossed the Androscoggin River to preach at the Middle Intervale Church, which at the time was without a settled pastor. At the meeting in the Sessions home, Young spoke of "establishing Zion" somewhere in the west, a place where Saints could live together and practice their religious beliefs without fear of persecution. He encouraged the local Saints to sell their farms and travel to Missouri to join others in this endeavor. On August 21 of the same year, the Sessions were visited by another Mormon elder and missionary, William McLellan, who recorded in his journal that he had preached about two hours at a "bro Cessions." By 16 September 1835, Perrigrine was convinced that he should be baptized, and he asked Edward Partridge to baptize him. On September 22, Perrigrine's and Julia Ann's first child was born and named Martha Ann.

Brigham Young and other members of the Twelve

Apostles visited Newry again in August 1836, and once more preached in the Middle Intervale Church. He again urged the members of the Newry branch to sell their farms in Maine and travel to Missouri where the Saints were gathering. Over the years, the Sessions family had acquired a farm of 400 contiguous acres along the Bear River. They had a saw mill and a grist mill using water power from the Bear River, and their home was large enough to serve as a public house for the region. Leaving all this seemed like a hard thing to do, but in May 1837, David and Perrigrine Sessions sold their farm to Almon and Eli Grover, who the next day sold it to Timothy Hilliard Chapman, a son of Timothy Chapman and grandson of Rev. Eliphaz Chapman, an early settler of Gilead.

T. H. Chapman was a young man, only nineteen years old at the time. It is difficult to know whether he ever lived on the farm in North Newry; in the 1840 census, the only Chapman on Bear River was George Granville Chapman. By the summer of 1848, Eliphaz Bradford Chapman was living there. In her *Sunday River Sketches*, Martha Fifield Wilkins writes that her mother, Lucelia Elizabeth Chapman was born on the farm 31 July 1848. In 1857, Lucelia's father sold the farm sold the farm to Jonathan Bennett, in exchange for a farm on the Magalloway River. Lucelia's mother did not want to move to Magalloway, and refused to sign the deed, but the exchange of farms happened anyway. According to Paula Wight, in her *Newry Profiles*, Jonathan Bennett built the front part of the present house in 1860. Whether the ell goes back to the time of the Sessions family, we don't know. The farm was passed from Jonathan Bennett to his son Frank, and then on to his son Roy. In 2000, the property was sold by the heirs of Roy Bennett to Keith Durgin.

In May 1837, the Sessions family packed their possessions for the trip west, and on 5 June, they left their home in Newry, accompanied by Patty's sister, Lucy Bartlett Powers, her husband Jonathan Powers, and their two sons. The Sessions family at this time included David and Patty, their son Perrigrine and his wife and daughter, their daughter Sylvia and son David. The Sessions family started with five two-horse teams and one single, and the Powers family had two horses. They passed through Shelburne and Lancaster in New Hampshire, then south to Hanover, where they crossed the Connecticut River, then on to Rutland, Vermont, Glens Falls and Saratoga Springs, New York, and across New York State to Buffalo, where they boarded a steam boat to Fairport, Ohio, and thence to Kirtland, Ohio. Here they met Joseph Smith and heard him preach, and suffered through an epidemic of measles for seven weeks. Then they bid farewell to the Powers family who returned to Maine, and continued their journey to Far West, Missouri. The Ohio settlers were becoming unhappy with the increasing numbers of Saints in Kirtland, and Joseph Smith had chosen Far West, on the west bank of the Mississippi River as the next gathering place for the Saints. The trip between Ohio and Missouri was made easier by the National Road, a project begun in 1811 that, when completed, led from Cumberland, Maryland to Vandalia, Illinois and was an important link to the west until railroads were developed. The Sessions family arrived at Far West in November 1837. Patty had been pregnant for the entire trip, and her last child, Amanda, was born after their arrival in Missouri 14 November 1837.

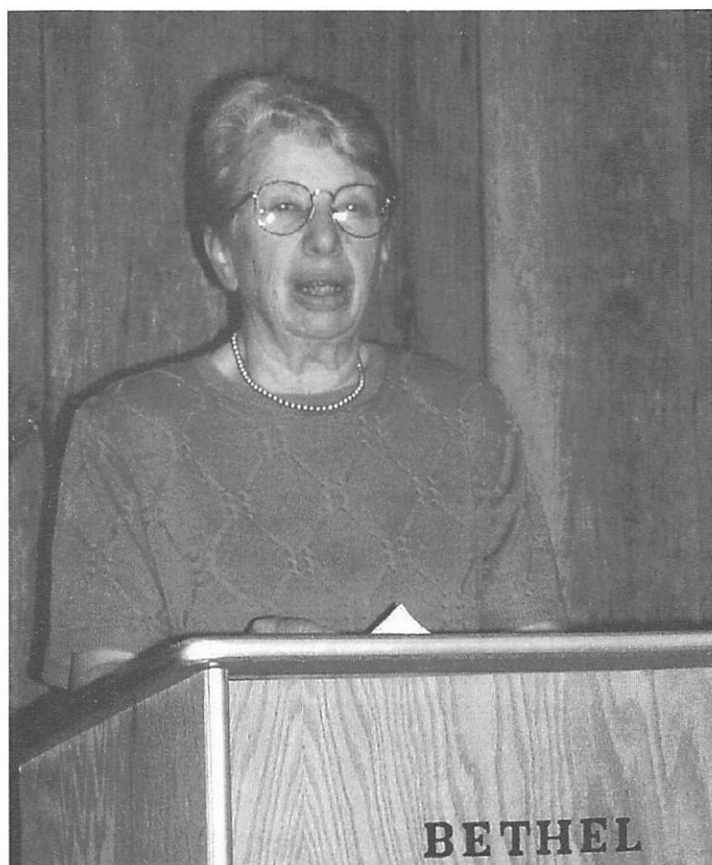
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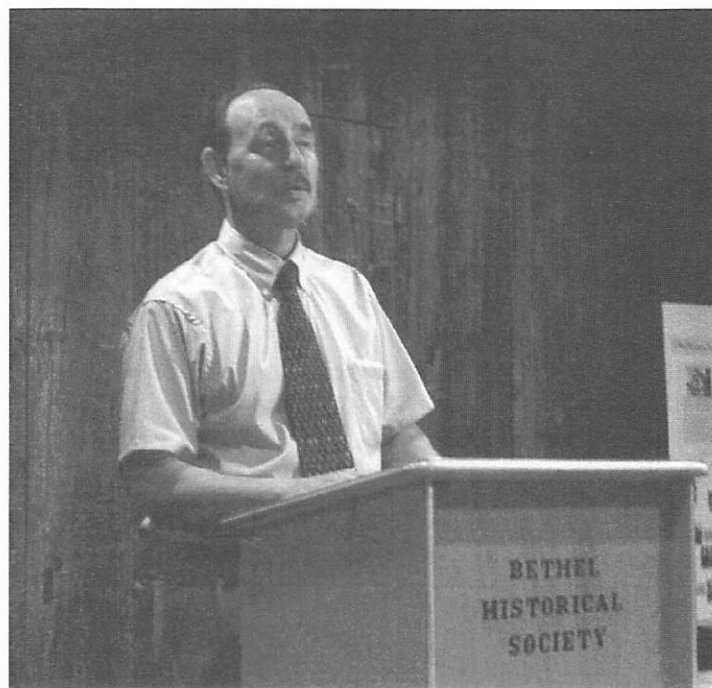
November 27, Snow, 6". Housed farm machinery. Rumford in p.m. I'm an Associate Member of Advisory Board for Draft. November 28, Blow. Cold! To Brentwood [estate in Freeport] for Thanksgiving Dinner. November 29, Clouding up again. Back on town line. Reblazed thru to 96 rods west of high bank west of Chapman Brook. November 30, Clearing, windy. West again toward Gilead. Ran into mix-up on Leighton's land. Didn't reach the town corner. Snow at night, 8". December 1, Clearing, windy. Laid floor in Dad's camp. Boarded gable, put in window & door & set up stove. December 2, Clear, cold. 8 hr. on Ed Bennett's. Gene & Dean [Farrar] helped me, \$4.50. December 3, Cold. 2 hr. for H. I. Bean in Albany Lot 9 R4 Hunt's Corner. Cut birch in p.m. December 4, -25 [degrees]. Clear & cold. Repaired barn. 4 hr. for Town of Bethel on Osgood Lot 14 R8 Bethel. Star Meeting. December 5, Cloudy, cold. Chained on town line with Rodney [Howe]. Ran base line west from Offset 2. Left Transit on line. December 6, Clear, cold. Ran thru to Chapman Brook. December 7, Cloudy, warmer. Ran west to end of old spots. Hard day. December 8, Put up spuds, a.m. Greenwood in p.m. 2 broken rear springs on my car. December 9, Clear, warm. Started at NW corner of Bethel & ran easterly on town line, 395 1/2 rods. December 10, Cold, cloudy. Finished town line job. December 11, Clear & warm. Portland with spuds. \$1 per cwt. December 12, Snow. Ruth & I went Xmas shopping in Portland. Masonic installation. I'm Senior Deacon. Rain at night. December 13, Clearing. Butchered veal. Filed saw. Norway in p.m. to see Dr. Swett. December 14, -10 [degrees] Clear, cold. Rumford with veal. 143 lbs. @ .16 = \$22.88. December 15, Worked on Dad's camp. Hung front door. P.M. went to Henry French's for apples, \$.50 & \$.75 per bu. December 16, Cold, rain. Hauled wood (1 cord) to Brownie Swan. Sawed wood for John. Sleet & ice at night. December 17, Clear & cold. Got load of shavings from Bethel. Slippery. Hard crust. December 18, Clear, cool. Finished siding on Dad's camp walls. December 19, Clear & cool. 8 hrs. for P. H. Chadbourne in Lot 13 Ranges 6 & 7 Albany. December 20, Cloudy, warmer. Put up spuds. Moved stove. Went to Bethel. December 21, Clear. Built window frame. Shingled roof around roof jack. December 22, Snow, 1 1/2". Put in second window. Practice meeting E. W. Degree. December 23, Cold, windy. Hauled logs. Threw my back out, 2 bones. Norway in eve. December 24, Cold, clear. Laying around. Laid floor, 1 hr. for Leonard Tyler. Lauri's folks came. December 25, Cloudy, warm. Celebrated Christmas. December 26, Warm. Put up spuds. Sawed wood & hauled 1 1/2 cords to Milton. December 27, Clear, warm. Sawed wood into cellars. Sold Ford engine, \$1 & Chev. Battery \$.50. Norway in p.m. December 28, Cloudy, warm. Tinkering. Bethel in p.m. Raining hard. December 29, Rain. Built a porch on Dad's camp. December 30, Rain. Director's meeting at W. M. Chandler's place. \$5 & \$3.36 for mileage. Masonic funeral at Upton for Bro. Scott Coolidge. Practice meeting in eve. December 31, Clearing, cool. 8 hrs. for Billy Chapman & Widd Twaddle in Gilead Range 13, N of River (Judd Blake place). 41st job this year. 1942-January 1, Clear & warm. 8 hr. for Ed Mann in Lots 2-3-4, 2nd Div., Rumford. Gene

[Burns] one day. January 2, Rain! Thunderstorm. Put up spuds. Norway in p.m. January 3, Clear & cold. Bethel in a.m. 4 hr. for Bill Chapman in L. 3 R 14, Gilead. Fell in the brook to my knees. Sent 2 [tire] casings to be retreaded. January 4, Snow. Worked on tires & Barb's skis. Greenwood in p.m. January 5, Cloudy. 7 hr. on Lots 19-20-21, R 11 for Paul Thurston. January 6, Clear & cold. 4 hr. on Chadbourne map drafting. Started cutting firewood. January 7, -14 [degrees]. Clear & colder. Ruth & I went to Portland. January 10, Clear & cold. Swamped roads in a.m. Bethel in p.m. January 11, Clear & cold. Made a saw frame. Insured Carrie Bartlett's and David Foster's buildings [Grange insurance]. Went to Greenwood. Richard Davis' mill burned in eve. January 12, Clear & cool. Filed saw, Snow & Neally No. 1. Cut pulp on Bean place. January 13, Clear, cold. Cut pulp in brook valley in a.m. P.M. Bethel with spuds. Insured 3 sets of buildings. Bob started for New York. January 14, Cloudy, cool. Cleaned John's ice house. P.M. cut grey birch. Police defence meeting at Rumford in eve. January 15, Clearing, windy. 6 hr. research for Paul Thurston. January 16, Cold & windy! Fixed oat cleaning mill. Put distributor on truck. Wired hen house cellar. No fit day to be out. January 17, Clear & warmer. Finished wiring cellar. Cut grey birch. Rumford after radiator. Blind spell & sick all night. January 18, Clear & warm. Snow is settling. Hiked over into back swamp. Bob got home. Put radiator on truck. January 19, Rain. 2 hr. for B. W. [Benjamin Webber] Kimball in Middle Intervale. January 20, Clear & warm. 6 hr. drafting for P.H. Chadbourne map job. January 21, Clear & warm. 6 hr. for Wm. Strout in South Woodstock. January 22, Clear & warm. 3 hr. in South Woodstock. 2 hr. research for Edwards, 1 hr. for P.H. Chadbourne. January 23, Cloudy, warm. Cut pulp in a.m. Filed saw. Went to N. W. Bethel to insure Bennett house. January 24, Clear & warm. Cut pulp in a.m. Rumford Corner & finished Chadbourne-Thurston line in p.m., 4 hrs. January 25, Clear & warm. Greenwood in a.m. Bethel in p.m. Star Installation rehearsal. January 26, Cloudy, warm. 7 hr. on Lot 1 R6, Albany for Fred Littlefield, \$7 paid. Masonic rehearsal. January 27, Clear & warm. Cut pulp in a.m. Filed, etc. in p.m. January 28, Cloudy, warm. Took Gene to Rumford for exam. Cut a new road on Bean place. Farwell's house caught fire, small damage. Finished the Police Court at Rumford. January 29, Clear & cold. Put up spuds & Bob went to Portland, \$2.10 per cwt. Cut pulp. Started the 10 week first aid course. January 30, 0 [degrees]. Clear & cold. Cut pulp. Norway in p.m. for treatment. January 31, Clouding, snow. Bethel in a.m. Stamped pulp in p.m. Retreaded casing put on. \$7.75. 5" snow, the first in 3 weeks or more. 1942-February 1, Cloudy, warm. Home in a.m. Star rehearsal at Bethel in p.m. February 2, Clearing & cold. Spuds to Bryant, 5 bu. 4 hr. on Thurston map job. Masonic rehearsal. February 3, -9 [degrees], Cold & windy. Filed in a.m. Worked on Farwell's house repair job in p.m. February 4, Clear & warm. Finished Farwell's job in a.m. P.M. Norway to see Dr. Ferris. Eve. Ruth and I were installed as Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron of Purity Chapter, Order of Eastern Star. Frank Bean installed. February 5, Clouding. Cut birch in a.m. South Paris in p.m. to confer with E. Cummings about the Oxford Town Farm job. Went to Oxford. Bethel in eve. to First Aid Class. February 6, Snow 6". Put up spuds all day. February 7, Rain (light). Finished Chadbourne map. Shod a range pole &

(continued at bottom of the following page)



Jean Hankins, Ph.D. of Otisfield Historical Society, made a presentation on May 12 at the Dr. Moses Mason House Meeting Room, titled "Settling Oxford County" as part of the Society's focus on the county's history during its bicentennial year. Photo courtesy of Danna B. Nickerson.



In June, Larry Glatz spoke at the Dr. Moses Mason House Meeting Room on the Oxford Bears in honor of Oxford County's bicentenary celebration which culminated with an all day event on Paris Hill on June 11.



Member Profile Kathy Kunkle

Kathy Kunkle was born in Cambridge, MA, the daughter of Robert Kimball and Margaret Crowley Burke. She grew up in Medford, MA, where her interest in history and historic houses dates from visiting the Royal House as a Girl Scout. After attending local schools, she graduated from North Cambridge Catholic High School before going on to study Latin at Emmanuel College in Boston, graduating in 1968. Two years later, she received a M.A.T. from Indiana University. This was followed by participating in an archaeological dig off the coast of Dalmatia. She taught history, English and Latin in Indiana, Pennsylvania, and California prior to coming to Bethel. She married Dan Kunkle in 1979. He became head of Gould Academy in 2000 and she joined the faculty as a college counselor and Latin teacher. They are the parents of two daughters.

Soon after arriving in Bethel, she became a member of the Society, where she has been a very active volunteer, guiding in the museum and assisting in the museum shop.

Her hobbies include reading, traveling, knitting and sewing.

(Diary of William S. Hastings, continued from page 9)

painted two poles partly. West Paris in eve. to Star. February 8, Squally. Greenwood in p.m. Dad Cole is much better. February 9, Cold & windy. Tinkered all day. February 10, Clear & warm. Hauled wood all day. February 11, Clear & warm. A.M. around the house. P.M. made & hung a door at Coburn place. Visited Jefferson Chapter in eve. Frank installed. February 12, Clear. Hauled wood, 3 loads. Bob started for Bangor. F.C. Degree on Bro. Drummond. I had to give the S. Deacon's lecture. February 13, Clear & cold. Bethel in p.m. Delivered P.H. Chadbourne's map. February 14, Clear & cool, windy. 7 hr. for Oxford, on town lines with Elmer Cummings. He admitted my line is right. Got car plates, 82-423. Norway installation in the evening. February 15, Clear & warm. Went to Upton with Grover's folks. Greenwood in eve. February 16, Clouding & 4" of snow. At Odeon Hall from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. registering draftees. I registered 116 in all.

(to be continued in the next issue)

Book Note

Timber...A History of Logging in New England. By Mary Morton Cowan. (Brookfield, CT: Millbrook Press, 2003. Pp. 128. Cloth. \$25.95.)

Mary Morton Cowan, whose father grew up in a logging camp in New Hampshire, has compiled a useful overview of the world of logging in New England from its earliest days in the 17th century until 2003. Although billed as a children's book, the ten chapters are topical, dealing with a number of subjects, ranging from mast logging to logging railroads and may also serve as a useful introduction for adults who know very little about this subject. There is also a logging timeline and glossary of terms as well as lists of additional resources that are buttressed with endnotes, bibliography and index. Several of the photographs are from the collections of the Bethel Historical Society. For teens and adults wishing to learn about New England logging, this book is a great beginning.

SRH

For ordering information, please see page 12.

Editor's Corner

To accompany the presence of the Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition on barns, the Society has planned a number of programs relating to the barn theme, including lectures on barns, a barn tour and a barn dance. We hope that members and friends will watch the program calendar published in the last issue in order to take advantage of these opportunities.

SRH

Society Launches E-News

The Society now e-mails program and event announcements, plus regular Society news, to members and friends. If you wish to be added to that list of recipients, please contact us by writing P.O. Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217, by calling (207) 824-2908 or (800) 824-2910 or by e-mailing info@bethelhistorical.org.

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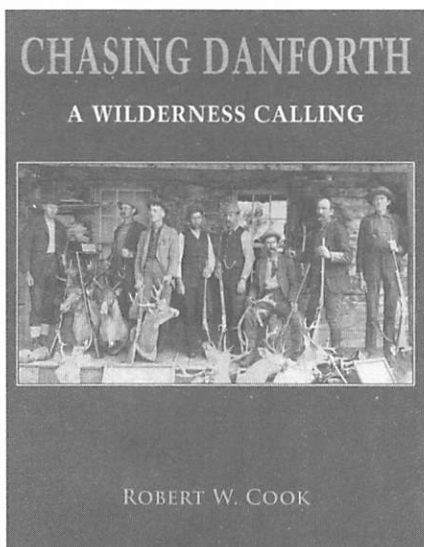
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FROM THE MUSEUM SHOP*



Chasing Danforth: A Wilderness Calling

By Robert W. Cook

This new biography of John Danforth (1847-1913), founder of the first sporting lodge at Parmachenee Lake in northern Oxford County, provides a fascinating look into the life of this accomplished guide, fisherman, hunter, trapper, steamboat owner, innkeeper, miner, and author. The text is supplemented with numerous maps, engravings, photos, endnotes, a bibliography, and an index. 176 pp., paper. \$23.95

To order: Send check or money order to the Bethel Historical Society, P.O. Box 12, Bethel, ME 04217-0012. Members may deduct 10% from prices given on orders of \$10 or more. Shipments to Maine addresses should include 5% sales tax. Shipping fees: under \$10 = \$2.00; \$10 to \$19.99 = \$3.00; \$20 and over = \$4.00

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